171. Defects in the Public Service.

MR. K. N. MADHAVAN KARTA (*Member, Shertallai taluk, Group II*) spoke of the defects in the present system of recruitment to the public service and made some suggestions for remedying them. Till lately there was in the country complete fraternity between the various communities. What with the conduct of the Government and their officers and what with the policy adopted in the matter of patronage, that cordiality was on the wane. There was a growing impression that appointments were made on communal grounds. The Member referred to memorials that were being circulated among the Members for signature, one recommending the appointment of Mr. Taliat as Judge of the High Court, another of Mr. Pathrose Mathai, a third of Mr. Kuttalalingom Pillai to the same office, and a fourth for nominating Mr. Tampuranthozha Pillai to the Board of Education, each urging his respective candidate on the ground of his belonging to a particular community. The tension between the communities was growing so strong that one felt that talukwar segregation of communities would be the only solution. Communal animosity tended to warp the sense of justice of officers. Some departmental heads proclaim that their orders are to appoint Christians. By mutual understanding, a regular system of appointing the relations and dependants of brother officers has been growing up. A native of Shertallai was a Tahsildar. He and his wife were brutally murdered in their house and his children are given a mere pittance as pension. Police Inspector Mr. Philip was recently murdered one night at a place where he had no legitimate business. Funds were collected for the endowment of his widow and children and the Government granted them a pension even higher than his pay. Dead or alive, the Christian had an obvious advantage. The development of communal ill-feeling might lead to disastrous results and it was incumbent on the Government to prevent its growth. Representation in the public service should be according to taluks, all applications being registered in the Huzur and recruitment centralised there. The Member said he was preparing a list of appointments made in the various departments during the last five years and hoped to submit it to the Government shortly. High officers were well paid. The attention of the Government should be directed towards improving the deplorable condition of the low-paid subordinates. There was no harm if the offices were to be distributed according to population, revenue, etc., of each taluk. Shertallai did not care whether a Trivandrum Nair or a Tiruvalla Christian was appointed, but would be grateful if a Shertallai man got a job. Though there were men in Shertallai, Christians and Nairs, who were fit even to adorn the High Court Bench, no one from that taluk has yet been taken. Officers had a tendency to ascribe their failure by reference to the communal feelings. Confidence in the officers would thereby decline. Character and efficiency should remain the primary considerations in making appointments. Officers cannot systematically suppress or trample down the people in any country.

DEWAN'S REPLY: Mr. Madhavan Karta, like a very skilled physician you have diagnosed the disease perfectly correctly. But when *you* prescribe the remedy, you want *me* to administer it. As far as I can make out, you tell me that I should stop it. If I can stop it by a Government order to-morrow, I would do so without a moment's hesitation. But I am afraid, it is not a Government order that will stop it; and my prescription is the very, very, old prescription of brotherliness and neighbourly love.

172. Recruitment to the Public Service.

MR. P. A. ABRAHAM (*Member, Kottayam taluk, Group I*) observed that different methods had been suggested by different Members to regulate recruitment to the public service. The Member disclaimed to hold any brief for the community to which by accident he belonged and which could not boast of many appointments to its credit. He should feel as members of a commonwealth inspired by the common ideal of a good administration and infused with a desire for co-operation with the several heads of departments and the head of the administration. The infirmities of mankind were shared by officials who too were human beings. The remarks which had been made personally against certain officers were to be deprecated. There was, no doubt, a good deal of chronic unrest regarding public service. Comments on public service were the common feature of

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